

25

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
FOURTH SERIES

VOL. XXI, No. 16, pp. 189-198

OCTOBER 16, 1934

---

THE TEMPLETON CROCKER EXPEDITION TO WESTERN  
POLYNESIAN AND MELANESIAN ISLANDS, 1933

No. 16

NOTES ON THE BIRDS

BY

M. E. McLELLAN DAVIDSON

*Assistant Curator, Department of Ornithology and Mammalogy  
California Academy of Sciences*

In the year 1933, Mr. Templeton Crocker, in his yacht *Zaca*, visited several groups of western Polynesian and Melanesian islands for the purpose of acquiring collections of natural history and ethnological material. The natural history specimens were destined for the California Academy of Sciences, and included ornithological representations from several rarely visited islands.

Bird skins secured by the expedition were taken on the following islands:

SOLOMON ISLANDS:

Malaita	Santa Catalina
Guadalcanar	Santa Ana
San Cristoval	Rennell
Ugi	Bellona

SWALLOW GROUP, SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS:

Lomlom	Nupani
Anuda	Matema

PALMYRA

October 16, 1934

Adequate collections from certain of the more interesting of the Solomon Islands have not been available until recently. Material secured in recent years by the Whitney South Sea Expedition has aided in the consolidation of the work previously accomplished by Tristram, Ramsay, Rothschild, Hartert, Stresemann, and others, and made possible Mayr's several studies<sup>1</sup> in distribution and differentiation. The avifauna of Rennell Island has been shown to be an important link in the distribution chain, and, although the material under examination appears to include no new forms, the California Academy of Sciences is fortunate in having such a valuable representation in its collections.

### *Sula dactylatra personata* Gould

Nos. 38261-63: male and females, April 2; Palmyra Island.

The bills of these specimens yield the following measurements:

	<i>Length of culmen</i>	<i>Breadth of culminicorn at base</i>	<i>Depth of bill at base</i>
Male.....	107.0 mm.	26.5	38.5
Females.....	101.5-104.0	25.5-30.0	36.5-38.0

### *Butorides striatus macrorhynchus* (Gould)

No. 38264: male, July 10; Mohawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

From this example, a bird in fresh adult plumage, the following measurements were obtained: Wing, 180.0 mm.; tail, 63.0; culmen, 64.0; tarsus, 48.5; middle toe, 42.0.

White tips are absent from the primary coverts, and only faintly indicated on the inner primaries and secondaries. The elongated dorsal plumes are strongly suffused with gray.

### *Demigretta sacra* (Gmelin)

Nos. 38265-66: male and female, July 19; Bellona Island, Solomon Islands.

Both birds are in white plumage and lack any indication of dark color. Plumage renewal is in progress in both examples, contour and flight feathers being involved. Much of the body plumage is new, but partially developed feathers are present on all the feather tracts. All the rectrices are newly acquired, and all but the second and third primaries have been replaced.

The measurements are: Male.—Wing, 308.0 mm.; tail, 111.0; culmen, 88.0; tarsus, 79.0; middle toe, 61.0. Female.—Wing, 292.0; tail, 110.0; culmen, 83.5; tarsus, 76.0; middle toe, 58.5.

<sup>1</sup> Am. Mus. Novit. Nos. 469, 486, 488, 502, 504, 516, 522, 531.

**Threskiornis æthiopicus pygmæus** Mayr

Nos. 38267-70: males and females, June 18; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

Unworn rectrices are Cinnamon Buff (Ridgway, XXIX)<sup>2</sup>, and the ruff feathers are also tinted with the same color. Elsewhere the white plumage is strongly suffused with Light Vinaceous-Cinnamon (Ridgway, XXIX). In all the examples the dark tips of the inner secondaries are much varied with white.

The measurements of the series are:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Male</i> [ <i>Female?</i> ]	<i>Female</i>	<i>Female</i>
Wing.....	336.0 mm.	316.0	311.0	330.0
Tail.....	119.0	116.0	117.0	116.0
Culmen.....	132.0	90.0	112.0	115.0
Tarsus.....	83.0	65.0	72.0	79.0
Middle toe.....	67.0	57.0	62.0	67.0

**Sterna bergii cristata** Stephens

No. 38271: male, July 1; Star Harbor, San Cristoval, Solomon Islands.

The example is that of an immature bird, passing into adult plumage. The primaries have been newly acquired. The bird measures, as follows: Wing, 336.0 mm.; tail, worn; tarsus, 28.0; culmen, 59.0.

**Megalopterus minutus minutus** (Boie)

Nos. 38272-73: females, July 15; Anuda Island, Santa Cruz Islands.

In both birds feather renewal is nearly complete.

**Heteractitis incanus** (Gmelin)

No. 38274: female, July 8; Nupani Island, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

The bird, in worn summer dress, is acquiring some of the feathers of winter plumage on the back and wings.

**Cirrepidesmus mongolus mongolus** (Pallas)

No. 38275: female, July 8; Mohawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

<sup>2</sup> Ridgway's *Color Standards and Nomenclature*, 1912.

***Ptilinopus rhodostictus rhodostictus* (Tristram)**

No. 38278: immature male, June 30; Santa Ana, Solomon Islands.

***Ptilinopus rhodostictus cyanopterus* (Mayr)**

Nos. 38276-77: adult and immature males, June 18 and 19; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

The older bird is just acquiring adult plumage. The measurements of this specimen are: Wing, 137.0 mm.; tail, 79.0; culmen, 13.5.

***Coryphænas crassirostris* (Gould)**

No. 38279: male, July 1; Star Harbor, San Cristoval, Solomon Islands.

***Eos grayi* Mathews & Iredale**

Nos. 38280-82: males, May 21; Kau Kau Harbor, Guadalcanar Island, Solomon Islands.

***Trichoglossus hæmatodus cæruleiceps* D'Albertis & Salvadori**

Nos. 38286-89: males and female, July 8; female, July 10; Mowhawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

Birds from the Swallow Group are tentatively placed under this head. The blue of the forehead and crown covers but a slightly greater area than in *aberrans*, and there is little more blue on the cheeks.

A renewal of the contour and flight feathers is complete or nearly so in all the individuals.

***Trichoglossus hæmatodus aberrans* Reichenow**

Nos. 38283-85: males and female, May 21; Kau Kau Harbor, Guadalcanar Island, Solomon Islands.

The plumage of the adult male and female is greatly abraded, but replacement has begun on the feather tracts of the head, and in the flight feathers.

***Eclectus pectoralis salomonensis* Rothschild & Hartert**

No. 38290: female, June 16; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

The plumage is greatly worn, especially the flight feathers, but inner primaries and outer secondaries are fresh and many new feathers are present among the interscapulars and on the rump.

**Collocalia fuciphaga vaukorensis** (Quoy & Gaimard)

No. 38291: female, May 31; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands. This example is in almost fresh feather.

**Hemiprocne mystacea woodfordiana** (Hartert)

No. 38292: female [male], May 31; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

This bird wears the plumage of the male and probably has been incorrectly sexed.

**Halcyon chloris solomonis** Ramsay

No. 38299: male, July 6; Star Harbor, San Cristoval, Solomon Islands.

This individual lacks any indication of the pale occipital spot which is present in a specimen, received previously, from Guadalcanar.

**Halcyon chloris amœna** Mayr

No. 38298: unsexed, June 20; Bellona Island, Solomon Islands. This is probably an example of a female not quite fully adult.

**Halcyon sancta** Vigors & Horsfield

Nos. 38293-97: males, June 20; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands. Males and one unsexed, June 21; Bellona Island, Solomon Islands.

Two immatures are in badly abraded plumage, and feather renewal is only just commenced on the body feather tracts. Two older birds are in almost fresh feather. One example has newly acquired central rectrices, and the next pair and the outermost are not fully grown.

**Coracina luneata gracilis** Mayr

Nos. 38414-17: female, June 18; male, July 21; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands. Female and unsexed bird, July 21; Bellona Island, Solomon Islands.

In all the examples the rectrices are narrowly fringed with white, and the lateral ones tipped with that color. In one female the outer rectrix has a white shaft line extending 11 mm. from the apex.

The measurements obtained from these specimens are:

	Male	Female	Female	Unsexed
Culmen.....	20.5 mm.	21.0	20.0	20.0
Wing.....	141.0	143.0	138.0	140.0
Tail.....	109.0	107.0	99.0	105.0
Tarsus.....	25.0	24.0	24.0	22.0
Middle toe.....	20.0	21.0	20.0	20.0

**Mino dumontii sanfordi** Hartert

No. 38299: female, May 31; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

This specimen measures: Length of culmen, 33.0 mm.; breadth of bill at nostril, 10.0; wing, 151.0; tail, 100.0; tarsus, 35.0; middle toe, 28.5.

**Aplonis cantorides cantorides** (Gray)

Nos. 38304-05: unsexed, May 26; Auki Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands. Female, July 6; Star Harbor, San Cristoval, Solomon Islands.

The museum is fortunate in having acquired specimens of this rather uncommon bird. The birds are in unworn plumage, and the second primary in the unsexed example is only partially developed. The wing formula of the female is  $3 > 4 > 2 > 5 > 6$ .

The measurements of the specimens are:

	<i>Culmen</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail</i>	<i>Tarsus</i>	<i>Middle toe</i>
Female.....	19.25 mm.	94.25	61.50	21.50	19.00
Unsexed.....	19.75	96.00	65.25	23.50	19.00

**Aplonis tabuensis fortunæ** Layard

Nos. 38306-09: female and males, July 7; Matema Island, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

The measurements obtained from this series are: Males.—Length of culmen, 20.0-21.0 (av. 20.5) mm.; breadth of bill at base, 7.0-7.5 (7.25); wing, 109.5-112.5 (110.6); tail, 64.0-70.0 (66.3); tarsus, 25.0-28.5 (27.0); middle toe, 20.0-20.0 (20.0). Female.—Length of culmen, 20.0; breadth of bill at base, 7.0; wing, 106.0; tail, 60.0; tarsus, 27.5; middle toe, 20.0.

**Aplonis metallica nitida** (Gray)

Nos. 38301-03: female, May 31; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands. Males, June 28; Ugi Island, Solomon Islands.

The moult of the two males is practically complete. The female wears the dress of an immature.

**Pinarolestes hamlini** Mayr

Nos. 38314-16: female, June 18; unsexed bird, June 20; male, June 21; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

The examples are in fresh plumage. They seem to measure rather less than those in Mayr's<sup>3</sup> series.

<sup>3</sup> Am. Mus. Novit. No. 486, 1931, p. 24.

	Male	Female	Unsexed
Culmen, from nostril.....	20.5	19.0	21.5
Culmen, exposed.....	28.5	26.5	29.0
Wing.....	93.5	86.0	89.5
Tail.....	77.5	75.5	76.5
Tarsus.....	23.5	22.0	20.0
Middle toe.....	16.5	16.0	16.5

**Monarcha ugiensis** (Ramsay)

Nos. 38310-11: male and female, June 30; Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands.

These specimens measure:

	Culmen	Wing	Tail	Tarsus	Middle toe
Male.....	20.75 mm.	83.25	77.5	20.5	14.0
Female.....	21.00	83.00	74.5	21.5	12.5

The female has the feathers of the lower abdomen and crissum narrowly tipped with rusty.

This species has not been recorded previously save from Ugi Island.

**Monarcha vidua** (Tristram)

No. 38313: female, June 30; Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands.

The measurements are: Culmen, 14.5 mm.; wing, 74.0; tail, 67.0; tarsus, 18.0; middle toe, 11.5.

This species is known from San Cristoval, but has not been reported before from Santa Ana Island.

**Myiagra ferrocyanea malaitæ** Mayr

No. 38312: female, May 31; Tai Bay, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

The specimen measures: Culmen, 15.0 mm.; wing, 72.5; tail, 62.5; tarsus, 15.5; middle toe, 12.5.

**Rhipidura leucophrys melaleuca** (Quoy & Gaimard)

Nos. 38317-18: female, June 28; Ugi Island, Solomon Islands. Male, July 3; Star Harbor, San Cristoval, Solomon Islands.

Both birds are in somewhat worn plumage, but have a few undeveloped feathers present on the occiput and nape.

The measurements are as follows: Male.—Culmen, 17.0 mm.; wing, 102.0; tail, 101.5; tarsus, 26.5; middle toe, 15.5. Female.—Culmen, 16.5; wing, 98.0; tail, 99.0; tarsus, 25.5; middle toe, 14.75.

**Rhipidura rennelliana** Mayr

Nos. 38319, 38410-11: females, June 20 and 21; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

The measurements of the two adult birds are: Culmen, 13.50-13.75 mm.; wing, 76.0-88.0; tail, 91.0-100.5; tarsus, 19.5-20.0; middle toe, 11.0-12.0

One adult is in almost fresh feather, the other is nearly so, but one lateral rectrix is still in the sheath.

#### ***Rhipidura rufifrons kuperi* Mayr**

Nos. 38412-13: male, July 2; Santa Catalina Island, Solomon Islands. Male, July 3; Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands.

The Santa Ana specimen is in almost fresh feather, but that from Santa Catalina has feather replacement still in progress on nearly all areas.

The birds measure: Santa Ana.—Culmen, 11.75 mm.; wing, 70.5; tail, 81.0; tarsus, 19.0; middle toe, 11.0. Santa Catalina.—Culmen, 11.5; wing, 66.0; tail, 77.5; tarsus, 19.0; middle toe, 10.5.

In coloration both individuals appear to conform to Mayr's<sup>4</sup> description of his new subspecies.

#### ***Pachycephala pectoralis feminina* Mayr**

No. 38418: male, June 18; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

The specimen is a bird in unworn plumage, and yields the following measurements: Culmen, 18.0 mm.; wing, 85.5; tail, 57.0; tarsus, 25.0; middle toe, 16.0.

#### ***Pachycephala pectoralis ornata* Mayr**

No. 38419: female, July 8; Mohawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group, Solomon Islands.

This bird appears to correspond very closely to Mayr's<sup>5</sup> description, save that the middle of the abdomen is more nearly Buff-Yellow (Ridgway, IV) than Lemon Yellow. The edge of the wing is Lemon Yellow.

The measurements are: Wing, 88.0 mm.; tail, 64.0; tarsus, 26.0; middle toe, 14.0

#### ***Myzomela cardinalis sanfordi* Mayr**

Nos. 38420-22: male, June 6; Kungava, Rennell Island, Solomon Islands. Male and female, June 20; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

#### ***Myzomela cardinalis pulcherrima* Ramsay**

Nos. 38423-24: males, June 28; Ugi Island, Solomon Islands.

<sup>4</sup> Am. Mus. Novit. No. 502, 1931, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Am. Mus. Novit. No. 531, 1932, p. 8.

***Myzomela cardinalis sanctæcrucis* Sarasin**

Nos. 38425-28: male May 8; Nupani Island, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands. Male, July 7; Matema Island, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands. Males, July 8; Mohawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group, Santa Cruz Islands.

Although the nomenclature employed by Mayr has been followed here, specimens of *Myzomela cardinalis* from Rennell, Ugi, and the Swallow Group fail to conform to his descriptions<sup>6</sup> of the subspecies *sanfordi*, *pulcherrima*, and *sanctæcrucis*. Birds in the Crocker collection from Ugi have the reddish color of the under parts Scarlet (Ridgway, I), the scarlet margins are broader than those of the Swallow Group and Rennell Island birds, and the reddish areas are quite as extended as those of *sanfordi*. In coloration, the reddish parts of the Rennell Island and Swallow Group series approach quite closely. The adult bird from Rennell Island is in worn plumage. In consequence, the reddish margins are somewhat narrow and the bird appears rather darker than the actual coloration of the feathers warrants. A specimen of *sanctæcrucis*, in fresh plumage, has broad Scarlet-Red (Ridgway, I) margins to the feathers, the basal black not being evident in the under parts. A female *sanfordi* has some of the interscapulars margined with reddish, and the bases of the feathers of the head slaty, not olive gray.

The measurements of the birds under examination are as follows:

<i>M. c. pulcherrima</i> (Ugi Island)					
	<i>Culmen</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail</i>	<i>Tarsus</i>	<i>Middle toe</i>
Males . . . . .	18.00-18.25	68.0-68.5	45.0-46.0	17.0-18.5	13.0-13.0
<i>M. c. sanfordi</i> (Rennell Island)					
Male, adult . . . . .	18.25	69.0	47.5	19.00	13.5
Male, immature . . . . .	18.00	61.5	42.5	19.00	12.5
Female, adult . . . . .	18.00	64.0	43.0	19.25	12.5
<i>M. c. sanctæcrucis</i> (Mohawk Bay, Lomlom, Swallow Group)					
Males . . . . .	20.0-20.5	74.0-77.5	50.0-54.0	20.0-20.0	13.25-14.00
<i>M. c. sanctæcrucis</i> (Nupani Island, Swallow Group)					
Male . . . . .	20.5	75.25	53.5	20.75	13.0
<i>M. c. sanctæcrucis</i> (Matema Island, Swallow Group)					
Male . . . . .	19.0	71.0	50.0	20.0	13.5

***Myzomela nigrita tristrami* Ramsay**

No. 38429: male, July 3; Santa Ana Island, Solomon Islands.

From this specimen were obtained measurements, as follows: Culmen, 20.0 mm.; wing, 68.0; tail, 48.5; tarsus, 18.25; middle toe, 12.0.

<sup>6</sup> Am. Mus. Novit. No. 486, 1931, p. 27; No. 516, 1932, pp. 22-24.

**Woodfordia superciliosa** North

Nos. 38430-33: male and female, June 6; Kungava Bay, Rennell Island, Solomon Islands. Male and female, June 6; Rennell Island, Solomon Islands.

	<i>Culmen</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail</i>	<i>Tarsus</i>	<i>Middle toe</i>
Males . . . . .	21.0-21.0	75.50-76.25	50.00-50.25	21.25-22.00	13.5-14.0
Female, adult	20.5	77.25	48.75	23.0	15.0
Female, immature..	21.0	73.0	47.75	23.5	14.0

The immature female is just commencing to moult, but replacement in the adult is practically complete.